

LETTERS  
OF  
ADVICE  
FROM TWO  
REVEREND DIVINES,  
TO  
A Young Gentleman,  
ABOUT A  
*Weighty Case of Conscience.*

And by him recommended to  
the serious perusal of all  
those that may fall into  
the same condition.

---

*Flie Youthful Lusts, 2 Tim. 2. 22.*

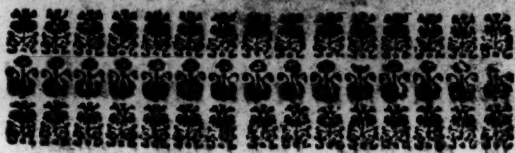
---

London, Printed for J. Collins in  
Ludgate-street, and D. Newman  
at the Kings-Arms in the  
Poultry, 1676.

---







T H E  
P R E F A C E.

To all Young men who have  
or may be tempted to this  
great Sin.

R E A D E R,

**I**Nto such a deplorable con-  
dition had the frequent pol-  
luting my self brought me,  
that I was considering whether  
I had not deserved the judg-  
ment that God sent to Onan ;  
& so apprehensive I was of it,  
A 2 that

## The Preface.

that it brought me into a kind of despair, till I had recourse to two most excellent, pious, and eminent Divines (whose works praise them in the Gates) and when I had received their advice, I was resolved to break off this my Sin by repentance and mortification; the only remedy to prevent my sudden destruction: for whatever you may at present think, that 'tis only a relief of nature, yet I must say it has been of horrid consequence to me, God having attended

## The Preface.

attended me with judgments ever since in most of my affairs in the world, and I cannot be satisfied till I have let you know it, in order both to prevent your danger & Ruin; for though the Sin of Adultery and Fornication be now the too open practices of most men, to the shame and reproach of Christianity, yet I am sure this Sin of self-pollution bespeaks you equally notorious Sinners, and puts you into a state of enmity with God, unfit you for those great duties

## The Preface.

ties you owe to him, renders you mean spirited, and destroys the very end of your Creation, and will leave a sting on your conscience; which will cost you dear: in all humility let me bespeak your care to peruse these excellent Letters, which I have published on purpose, as a warning to all such who thus defile themselves, and as you tender your own welfare, even in this world as well as your souls good in the world to come, you will as much hate  
and

## The Preface.

*and abominate this horrid wickedness, as it will certainly lead you to ruin; and then I shall have my design in the publication of these excellent Counsels.*

Your Friend

B. P.

---

The

1864

1865

1866

1867

1868

1869

1870

1871

1872

1873

1874

1875

1876

1877

1878

1879

1880

1881

1882

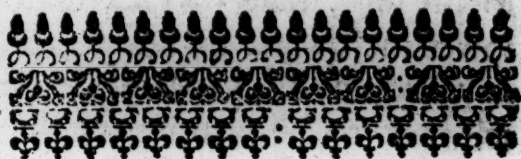
1883

1884

1885

1886

1887



*A Letter of Advice to a*  
*F R I E N D.*

S I R,

**I** Received your Letter last Night, wherein you are pleased to make me your Confessor, and desire my Resolution in a Question or two, which you would willingly receive by this days Post. Though I am little studied in matters of that Nature, wherein you would be satisfied, and have some affairs

B

so

so pressing, that they have al-  
 lowed me of late no leisure for  
 any study at all, yet I could not  
 tell how to be wanting in the  
 least to one that professes such  
 affection to my Labours, and is  
 in so much distress of mind him-  
 self. You might, no question,  
 have had recourse to some abler  
 Physicion, near at hand, whose  
 Counsel would have been more  
 mature and deliberate than mine  
 can now be; but since it is com-  
 monly said, that an high opinion  
 and esteem in the patient of him  
 with whom he consults, doth  
 contribute much to his cure;  
 I thought it was possible that this  
 Paper may become, by that  
 means, more effectual upon you  
 than other mens more learned  
 Prescriptions.

You



You have rightly determined that this self-pollution is not the sin of *Onan*, (though, I think some Romish Casuists so call it) for he had taken to wife the Relict of his Brother, and out of a scorn to beget a child that should bear his Brothers name, (according to the custom in that nation,) and not his own; at that very time when she expected to be embraced by him, directed it another way, and not to its proper place. But yet no doubt a grievous sin you have committed, not so much because you acted against nature, as because you did it, knowingly, frequently, with deliberation, with delight, and against many resolutions (as I perceive) to the contrary.

And therefore it is but necessary that you should lay it much to heart, and look upon your self as an inordinate lover of carnal pleasure, as one that hath in some sort defiled your own body, stained your Baptism, offended the Spirit, unhallowed and defecrated its Temple, & deserved to be destroyed. Mistake me not, I do not equal your sin with that of fornication, concerning which the Apostle speaks these dreadful things; but I say in some sort, in a lesser degree you have incurred that guilt, by fornicating with your self, and that after you were better instructed and had purposed amendment.

Yet all this doth not make  
your

your crime unpardonable, but only more difficult to cure. Sins of deliberation, often repeated, against vows, and with delight are very dangerous, but the danger consists in this, that they are hard to be forsaken, because of an habitual pleasure in them. You will agree, I suppose, to this doctrine following, which I take to be infallible.

1. That there is no pardon to be hoped for without repentance.

2. That repentance is forsaking of the sin totally.

3. That it is an abandoning of all sin whatsoever.

4 That though this forsaking of sin do not make us clean as to what is past, yet it hath a

promise of mercy and forgiveness annexed to it, which we cannot fail of. 1 John 1.7. If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. Observe that it is from all sin, and likewise take notice, that in the ninth v. he saith, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sin, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. From whence we may draw another certain conclusion, that pardon may be claimed as a matter of right and justice by him that forsakes his sin. God should not be just if he should deny it to such a person suing for it. It consists not with his faithfulness to withhold it.

Then

Then add this farther, that if sin be forgiven, God must needs treat us as his friends, and use us as kindly as if we were in innocency, for it is sin only that makes a separation between us. From whence it follows, that his spirit which he hath promised to those whom he loves must also return again and forget the former affronts that were offered to it.

Your first Question then is resolved, and you may be at peace if you but forsake this sin and all other, for you see, the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all unrighteousness, when we turn from the works of darkness and walk in the light; and together with our cleansing, the Holy-ghost

B. 4.

comes

comes again and resumes his former dwelling, which is no more offensive to him. Now I doubt not but there is a possibility (though perhaps some difficulty) of forsaking this sin, and so becoming the habitation of God through his Spirit, because you have the Spirit of God in some of its operations, viz. as the Spirit of Illumination and Understanding, though not in all other that belong to it. You discern and acknowledg the sin, the hainousness of it, its evil consequents, the injury it doth to God, to his Son, and Holy Spirit; I doubt not therefore but the Spirit will farther communicate it self to you, if you will but follow my advise.

Labour

Labour to understand the Gospel, and to have as comprehensive a sense as you can of your Duty contained therein; and hereby (those being the words of the Spirit) the Holy Ghost will sanctify that part of you which the Apostle, *1 Thes. 5. 23.* calls *the Spirit, i. e.* the mind and understanding, which is cleansed by these new Principles assented unto. Then bring your heart to consent to be governed and lead by the holy rules of life; press them with all the reason you can upon your heart, and soul, receive them, and love them in the life of it, as the very words of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Life. Hereby that



part of you which the Apostle calls *the Soul*, i. e. the will and the affection will be sanctified also. Next to this, that which he calls *the Body*, i. e. all the outward actions of Life will inevitably be sanctified and prove conform to that determination of your Soul or will, if you do but constantly follow the counsel of another Apostle St. Jude. v. 20, 21. Building up your self in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy-ghost, keeping your Soul in the love of God, and the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal Life.

I beleive in some constitutions the stimulations to this sin may be very vehement and hard to be resisted, and therefore it will  
not



not be amiss to tell you that you must call in the assistance of all other natural remedies, to which a Christian must not think it below him to be beholden. As  
 1. Meditate much upon sad & doleful objects, get your fancy painted with such kind of images as have little of light and gaiety in them, for such things do quicken and inspire the natural spirits of all sorts, and in all parts, making them more brisk and nimble; whereas more dark thoughts are apt to blunt and stupify them, making them long for nothing of pleasure.

2. you must use a spare diet, but not totally abstain. Fasting, I beleive, some use as a remedy against the provocations to unclean-

cleanness, but I think in some tempers it rather sharpens the humor and makes it more itching and apt to irritate.

3. Have a care of the kind & quality of your meat. As 1. salt meat you must forbear; which, you may know by the very nature of the word, makes men fallacious. A learned Physician of our own observes, that in Ships which come laden with Salt from *Rochel*, the Mice breed thrice as fast as those do which are in Ships laden with other Merchandize. Pidgeons you know have salt laid for them to pick upon; and the *Ægyptian* Priests, being Votaries to a single life, abstained from all salt whatsoever. But that is an error  
on

on the other hand, and may have dangerous effects. 2. All windy meats, for the flatuousness of them do puff up the humour, and make those parts more turgid; such are beans, and pease, and Artichoaks in part. You know *Pythagoras* forbid his Scholars to eat a bean; and this was one reason I make no question of his prohibition. 3. According to the description you make of yourself, I must add that Butter is naught for you, all Physicians agreeing that it is to be avoided by those who labour with the Flux of any humour whatsoever. There is too great an unctuousness in it; and in some bodies by the resolution of these oily parts it creates fumes also,  
which

which hinder the command of the mind over those lower parts.

4. I would advise you to be most abstemious about the full and change of the Moon; for then the whole body is fuller of moisture than at other seasons.

5. It will be good to eat only dry suppers, unless it be water-grewel, and such cooling diet.

6. I would advise you to use much exercise, though not too violent, for that spends much of the superfluous moisture in the Body, and likewise, if it be to a small weariness, spends some of those spirits that will else evacuate themselves at other places. Do not handle those parts at any time, unless when necessity of nature requires: and I should think

think likewise that it will be good after you have humbled your self so for this sin as to forsake it, then not to think of it any more, or as little as ever you can ; for even the thinking upon that sin doth renew the desire of it. Any thoughts concerning things belonging to those parts do but excite and provoke lust. For then the thoughts send the spirits to those parts and makes them swell, even as upon other occasions they send them to the muscles in the Legs or Arms when we would use them. Forget therefore as much as you can, that there hath been any such thing done by you, and imploy your thoughts otherwise till you may think of it with

with more safety, that is, when you are married.

And now for that second question, I hope you will pardon me if I should wholly wave any discourse on that subject, both because it is not pleasing to me, and because I shall intrench too much upon the Physicians Province. But, because you make it a case of conscience, I will say a word or two of it. It had been well if you had thought of Marriage as your remedy before this time, though now I hope it is not too late, for you say only that you are almost unfit for it. If you be troubled with a Gonorrhæa or running of the reins, that is a constant flowing of seed, and that with little or no titillation,

tion, it will be necessary to go to some Physicion, and advise with him for a cure, else it may bring you to your grave sooner than to a married bed. And so you must do if you have by much practice so relaxed the muscles which extend the *Penis*, that there be no erection of it. If you mean by unfitness, no more but that you have weakned your self very much for such acts, then you must be sure to chuse a Wife of such a cool and milky temper, that she will not require frequent satisfaction; this is all that I can perswade my self to say in an argument that I am so much unacquainted with, and have no list to study; it will be better to commend you in my prayers



prayers to the direction of God;  
 who, if you sincerely supplicate  
 him, will no question advise you  
 and assist you to carry your self  
 like a good Christian, and to  
 keep fast to your ingagements;  
 which now I hope you have  
 bound your self withal. Run a-  
 way I beseech you from such  
 thoughts whensoever they come;  
 think how filthy a thing it is to  
 be inflaved to such brutal de-  
 fires, study much the joys of the  
 world to come; let your affecti-  
 ons be set upon those heavenly  
 things, and above all things a-  
 void doing nothing. I am glad  
 to hear that any person hath re-  
 ceived any benefit by my small  
 Labours, and wish, as you do,  
 if they be capable to advance  
 the



the knowledg and love of God,  
and of our Lord, that they were  
in the hands of that Person you  
write of, who is able to dis-  
perse them further than I beleive  
they go. I chose that Bookseller  
for whom they are printed, be-  
cause I knew no other, and he  
was commended to me by some  
acquaintance for an honest man,  
but many friends since that time  
have expressed the same desire  
that you do. Pardon these hasty  
lines, which I had scarce time to  
read over again, from

*Your very willing servant  
in all Christian Offices*

*I. B.*

*The*



*The Second Letter of Advice  
to a Friend.*

S I R,

**T**Hough I am a stranger to  
your person, yet you have  
made me not to be stranger to  
the estate of your soul; which  
indeed I find to be deplorable  
enough; and there is no sorrow  
great enough for it, except such  
sorrow as drives you from God.  
*Exigit autem Ille dolor plusquam  
lex illa dolori concessit,* let your  
anger

anger be infinite against your sin, watch against it with all the caution that is imaginable; & now that your state is such, that you can scarce sin any more in that instance where your evil lies, show zeal & indignation against your self, and judg your self severely for what is past, & while you live never be reconciled to your self; but pray for pardon perpetually; but then be sure to hope for it humbly, or else you can never pray for it acceptably.

Do not think a few tears, or some short penances are enough in your case; take no measures, but even all you can; and give your self up to a very holy life, and remember your sin is too great for any thing, but Gods  
mercy

mercy ; this indeed is infinite, and must needs infinitely exceed your burden and your calamity. Sr, your sins have been carnal; take heed you do not add despair, for that is a spiritual evil, ten thousand times worse than the other. They dishonoured your own body ; but this dishonours God directly, and speaks reproachfully of him. Once more begin a true Repentance, and finish it ; and be afraid to provoke God any more : for there is a time in which God will be no more intreated ; the oftner any man breaks his vows of repentance, the nearer he is to that state. If God gives you life and the grace of repentance and amendment, it is certain you  
are

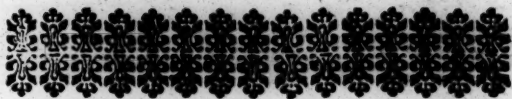
are not yet fallen into that state;  
 but I pray tempt God no more,  
 your soul is too precious a con-  
 cern to be put so often to the  
 venture. Sr. you have only  
 spoken to me in general, and I  
 have given you a proportionable  
 answer, if in any particular que-  
 stion you desire to be resolved,  
 though (blessed be God) *England*  
 is full of most able persons to  
 give you answer, yet I will de-  
 cline no trouble you shall re-  
 quire of me, and I will neither  
 call it, nor think it a trouble,  
 if I may do comfort or instructi-  
 on to your Soul. I pray God bless  
 and sanctify your penitential  
 sorrow to you, and increase it to  
 an excellent and a perfect repen-  
 tance; remember that all the  
 pains

pains and care which repentance can put you to in this world, are not half so bad as one minuit of the eternal pains of Hell. Sr, I can only add this, that I shall joyn together with you in prayers to God for your pardon and restitution to Gods favour, and the excellency of Spirit which such carnal sins destroy. Be pleased when you are healed to pray for me also, who am

*Your Affectionate Friend  
in our Blessed Lord.*

*W. D.*

*The*



*The Third Letter of Advice  
to a Friend.*

S I R,

**A**S to the business of *Onan*,  
my opinion is the same  
with theirs that think the  
lewdness of the Fact was com-  
posed of Lust, and Murther ;  
the first appears in that he went  
rashly upon it. It seems he stay-  
ed not till Night for the time of  
privacy for such a purpose, else  
the *bed* might have been named  
as well as the *ground*; the second  
C is

is the honor of his dead Brother, and therefore would not be Father of any Child that should be reported his, and not his own; the third is, that there is a Seminal Vital virtue which perisheth if the Seed be spilt, and to do this to hinder the begetting of a living Child is the first degree of Murder that can be committed, and the next unto it is the marring conception when it is made, and causing of Abortion. Now such acts are noted in the Scripture as horrible crimes, because otherwise many might commit them, and not know the evil of them. It is conceived that his Brother *Er* before was his Brother in evil thus far, that both of them



them satisfied their sensuality against the order of nature, and therefore the Lord cut them off both alike with sudden vengeance, which may be for the terror of those who, in the neglect of Marriage, live in secret impurity with themselves, and to those who in Marriage will satisfy their Lust, but hinder the product of Children, which is the principal use of the Conjugal estate, but not for the meer gratifying their Concupiscence.

*Your Friend and Servant*

*L. L.*



*The fourth Letter of Advice  
to a Friend.*

S I R,

**T**He Bed is too great a Friend  
to this Sin, therefore let  
me advise you three things con-  
cerning that. 1. Make no  
farther use of it than for your  
sleeping time. Whilst you lye at  
your ease your flesh will be eg-  
ging you on to this sinful pleasure  
therefore imploy your self with  
some good Book until you find  
sleep coming on upon you ; and  
in the Morning quit the Bed up-  
on

on the first awaking. I know it's more healthful to the Body to continue in Bed sometime after sleep, that the vapours may have time to scatter, and the natural Spirit recover their strength and activity; but for you who are prone to this lust, it's better to deny your Body that convenience than suffer your Soul to be punished through sensuality.

2. Sleep on one side and not on your back, for that heats the reins, which cause Irritations to Lust. 3. For your Life forbear all parly with the Flesh after the first motion to that flesh pleasing Lust. It may be you have not observed the different rules the Scriptures give between mortifying those sins the Devil would

put us upon, and mortifying those Lusts the Flesh would tempt us to. The former is done by resisting, *resist the Devil and he will flee from you.* There when a Man grows stout and couragious Satan grows cowardly ; but it is not so with the business of the flesh, there your greatest safety is in flying. Do as the great Apostle in another case, consent not with flesh and blood, remember when you have to do with Satan, your enemy is without you, but when you have to do with Lust, the enemy is within you. If you but offer to debate, it will deceive : sin first deceives and then it slays ; therefore I advise you when you find this unclean Devil getting into  
your

your fancy ; rather leap out of your Bed and fly from between the sheets, than give it the advantage of such a Field where Lust loves to be. Hereby you will imitate *St. Paul*, who beat down his Body on purpose that he might have the fuller blow at his Lusts. I know it will cost some violence at first to nature to be flung so suddenly out of a warm Bed upon a cold floor, but the difficulty will soon vanish after five or six times practice of it ; besides the comfort that will arrive from the *Euge bone* which you will have in your own brest upon the doing of it, will make amends for it and much more. The Church History makes mention of a young man who being in

C 4                      danger

danger to be overcome by the  
sight and solicitation of a Beau-  
ful Harlot that was with him  
on purpose to betray him into  
her imbraces, bit off a peice of  
his Tongue, that so the anguish  
and pain possessing his thoughts,  
lust might have no room there.

*Your affectionate Friend*

W. S.

---

---

The

## Mr. Capels Judgment

*Of lusts of Uncleanness in general,  
and why they burden the conscience  
so much.*

THE last is the lusts of *Uncleanness*, which do press upon the conscience as much, if not more than any, because they are very sensual and of a brutish nature ; deprive a man not only of Religion, but of the free use 1. of *reason* ; are many of them committed with and upon another, and so a second person is brought within the guilt, as also by the reason of the concomitant fleshly delight, for they are acted with very great willingness : and when many of

C 5

them



them are done, though nature it  
 self say (*no to them*) they are done  
 with very much wilfulness : and  
 now, where much will is, there  
 is much guilt ; where much guilt  
 is, there is much horror, and  
 then again, because these lusts  
 do prevent the order and course  
 of man-kind, irregulating the  
 right succession of families ; and  
 in the point of adultery, and  
 that kind of Bastardy, it doth  
 put in a strange Bird to inherit  
 the Nest, and wear away the  
 feathers, which is unspeakable  
 theft, and to be confessed in  
 some acts of the adulteress ; lest  
 sometimes to her foul adultery  
 she add horrible theft, that the  
 Child of a Stranger carry not a-  
 way the goods or lands of the  
 family.



family. These and many other concurrent or consequent absurdities do make this Sinery aloud; and it hath a special measure and order of uncleanness above any Sin else. All sins are unclean, and Satan is an unclean spirit; but there is something in it, why the Apostle is so distinct, as to call this sin above all other the lust of uncleanness. Great care and diligence is to be used to hold these lusts off. They are in their Original appointed to preserve the *species* of mankind: and as hunger is a potent desire, it being ordained to preserve the person of man in the individual; so much more these motions are violent and mighty, being made to make good

good the succession and propagation of the whole kind of man: might they are when they run in the right channel ; but if we suffer them to take a wrong, bias and to fall into unlawful courses, where also Satan drives them on, how then do they bear down all ? They cast a man into such a subjection, and (as I may call it) voluntary compulsion, that the Apostle saith, *Such cannot cease to sin*. Again, I must borrow leave to put in this, that we are the rather to take heed of these pollutions, because when we are in once (by reason of the great sence of guilt they carry with them, in that they fly in the face of both spiritual and natural conscience at once) they bring

bring men to great terrors and inward horrors, making men believe that there is no hope of such, and from thence, men run upon the rocks of self-murthering tentations; and more, I think, have made themselves away out of inward fears, arising from some unclean pranks, than for any other thing else: and the cause hereof, is, because that these lusts bring great shame amongst men if once out; but the main is, because they carry with them great inward shame, not only spiritual betwixt God and ones self, but natural betwixt a man and himself: as we see in those actions of this nature where they are don without sin, yet there is a kind of natural shame

shame. And now because there  
 is such a shame of all sorts, men  
 are wondrous loth to let any  
 man know what the matter is  
 that troubles them. And in the  
 tentation of self-killing, if a man  
 keep the core to himself, he is  
 in great danger, ; but if a man  
 do once out with it, after he  
 hath been with God, and it will  
 not do ; I say then if one do  
 out with all, to a wise and tru-  
 sty friend, *that he is in the tenta-*  
*tion of Murthering himself, and the*  
*cause to be some foul unclean pollu-*  
*tion* ; why then one would won-  
 der, upon what a sudden the  
 heart will feel ease, and the cure  
 is as good as done. But now be-  
 cause there is such shame, and  
 we are loth to out with it, *that*  
*we*

*we have been unclean; and the burning fire will hardly quench except one break up the Boil, and vent the corruption, by opening all our mind to some godly Friend; upon these considerations I propose it as an excellent piece of counsel to all, to beware of the lusts of uncleanness; the sin is great, the consequence greater.*

Moreover, this is a great matter in it too, that we do grow into troubles of mind for sin, according as we do apprehend them in the greatness of them; and we do conceive much of the greatness of sin, according as the opinion and judgment of the World goes. These are not (in our apprehension) ever

ver the greatest sins, which the Word saith are : but which are most out of request with the World. Now this lust of uncleanness, is a great eye-sore amongst men ; it is so rated at by many men, as though God had made but only the seventh Commandment ; whereas covetousness and pride far greater sins in themselves (take them precisely) are not so esteemed amongst men , no nor amongst common Christians. A man may go for a famous Christian, and yet be extream covetous, as we see in *Judas* : but if he be a man given to uncleanness, it is a sin so out of all credit, that a man who is, and is known to be infected with it, cannot amongst  
men

men in their opinion go for a good Christian; and now because the World doth hoot at this sin, we are apt to pine exceedingly in our consciences, when we are overtaken in this unclean passion; and to grow towards a bloody conclusion; as though the sin had in it that greatneſs, that there were now no hope of us. And this may well go for another useful consideration, to move us by all means to keep from the lust of uncleanness. And lastly, this sin many times weakens the Body, that it pines away, and darkens ones senses, shortens ones life, and, then comes a huge cry, that we have rotted away our life : are guilty of hastning  
our



our own death, and much ado there is to quiet the storm which comes in this way: *Wherefore for this cause also abstain from fleshly lusts.* We see then that it leaves the greater brand on the conscience, because of the dishonour and blot of this sin, as well as by reason of the dishonesty of it, as also for that there is a degree of uncleanness in this sin over there is in any else; which foulness the heart of man doth rise against: and this cannot but touch us with some degrees of terror also; and that this sin doth carry some special stain of dishonour, with it, read it in *Solomon, A wound and dishonour shall he get, and his reproach shall not be wiped away.* And in *Paul,*  
*Who*



*Who calls chastity a mans honour:*  
 Upon these grounds and considerations it was that Saint Peter saith, *That fleshly lusts do war against the Soul.* These are the Devils Captains, and do (meaning to kill us) smite at the head, *war against the Soul:* other lusts do war against the Soul too; but there is some special matter in it, that these fleshly lusts are said *to war against the Soul;* shall I say, that it is, because that though other lusts do war as much against the graces of the Soul: yet there is not any that do war more, no, nor in some respects so much against the peace of the Soul; and therefore in *Peters* words we are to be beseeched (of all lusts) to abstain from fleshly lusts.

Of



*Of Self-Pollutions.*

**W**E will now enter into a particular discovery of such special branches as may make the matter the plainer. Lusts of uncleanness are committed either, First, with ones self: Secondly with others. First, we will begin with those committed with ones self, which are greater in themselves (abstract them from all other circumstances) than with any other; as self-murder is worse than the murder of another; so in and of it self, this sin is worse than polluting of another.

For

For the rule is, that the sin that doth break the order of love most is the worst, love being the keeping of the Commandment: I must not defile my neighbour, because I am to love my neighbours chastity; but I am to love my self and mine own chastity, before the chastity of any else: and this is a foul sin much against nature, and therefore the worse; for the more unnatural the sin is, the greater the guilt is still in that respect; & whereas it is thought that there is not that wrong in it, as is in taking away the chastity of another: I urge it, that there is most wrong when a man doth wrong himself: and as the Thief doth in the candle, so these self-defilements do.

do rot and weaken the body, by the curse of God exceedingly. Besides (as in all such inordinate practices) there is a secret kind of murther; what if not in the intention of the doer, yet in the condition of the thing done; wherefore God is much displeased with these kind of sins, they are execrable in his sight, pay the conscience home when they are set before us in their true and right colours; make people unfit for marriage without the great mercy of God: ever after I could wish people to marry on ever so poor terms, rather than to fall into such illicite, dark, and abominable practices, which do grieve the very principles of nature; (say)  
let

let the worst come that can, for outward things, it is better to beg than burn in Hell ; I will trust in God, I will follow him ; he that feeds the Ravens, he will provide ; I will rather bring trouble on the outward man, than on the soul : it is wisdom to look to the soul what ever becomes of the body : whatsoever comes it cannot be worse than sin ; nay, whatsoever it be, it cannot be bad with us so long as we obey. For howsoever there may be some difference of Estates in the general, yet sure it is, that is the best for us in the particular, which God calls us unto ; there lies our peace, our joy, our comfort.

*Q. Whether*

*Qu. Whether a sin be the lesser or the greater, because it is done against conscience.*

*Sol.* When a thing is done from which ones conscience would fain restrain one, then it is said to be done against conscience. 2. If we will take it so large as conviction, then Satan sins against his conscience, for he is convinced that it is evil which he doth. 3. Sometimes the sin is the worse, because it is not against any act of conscience; as when the conscience is dead or seared, and saith nothing, because it feels nothing; or when conscience is so wilfully blind that it sees nothing, & therefore saith nothing; here is great contempt when men will be

be ignorant a purpose, because they will keep their conscience as quiet as a Clock may be; I say, this shews great corruption, because man is naturally very desirous of knowledge. 4. When the sin is done against the voice of a speaking conscience. If we take part with the sin against the conscience, are angry that our conscience would not let us take that free delight in sin, nor give that full consent to sin, and are not willing that conscience should say any thing unto us when we have done; in this case the sin is much the worse, and shews much strength, in that it is thus done against conscience. But now if we take part with the vice within, and

D

are



are heartily sorry that our temptation and our passion meeting together, do bear down the power of conscience, and do, do what we can, take part with the reluctance while it is a doing : & when it is done, nothing in the world troubles us more than that we did not give way to the act of conscience, and keep from the sin, and do joyn with our conscience against our lust, and are putting more strength into the power of conscience against another time. In this case, when I say we take part with the conscience against the sin, it makes the sin the lesser ; but when (as I said) we joyn with the sin against the conscience, then the sin is the worser ; for here lust and



and corruption rule and do all.

*Qu. Do not unregenerate men take part with their conscience against their lust?*

*Answ.* Some do, sometime, in some cases, as with the conscience against Sins contrary to the light of nature, and with such moral habits of virtue as some are partakers of, against lust and vices, contrary to those moral virtues: and one may find it that the will (as endued with virtue) is in the unregenerate set sometimes against other powers, and sometimes also against it self too, (as it is corrupted with vice) and in this sence here is found in them the will against it self, some strife in the will with

the will; the Philosopher doth teach that drunkards do use to feel some remorse, and the incontinent person feels within him some sensible strife betwixt virtue and vice. Now in this case his Moral disposition may make him to take part with his conscience against his motions to some vice, and when it doth, his vices have an infirmity and a weakness in them, and are the lesser. Here then lies the difference, that though his vice be the less for this cause, yet it is a vice not only in him, but to him, because he hates it not out of love to God, and doth not what he doth, in taking part with conscience for Gods sake. As all is said to be flesh which is  
not

not spirit; so conscience, and all in an unregenerate man is nothing but flesh. But now a regenerate man takes part with his conscience first or last, before or after against all sins, against conscience that he is awar of, and doth it out of the love of God and of his Word, and out of the power of grace, and is in a true hatred against his corruption, not (to use their language) as a vice but as a sin done against the word and law of God, and thus his sin is not imputed to him by and through Christ Jesus. But of this perhaps more in a more convenient place.

To return from this digression, I say, all care must be used to keep off unnatural passion :

the sting of conscience is great, the cure is hard, and somuch the more difficult because what for the danger, and what for the shame of them, men cannot be easily brought to make their mind known to any man : which gives the greatest advantage to Satan to work his will upon us : but if any be overtaken, in any hand, let him send up to God ; and in case God put him off, out with it to some spiritual man, who must and will, and as God shall be pleased to bless his labours, shall restore him with the spirit of meekness.



*Certain Medicines. 1. To prevent unclean lusts. 2. To cure the effects of them.*

**I** Mean now to grow towards a conclusion, and the rest shall be taken up in some directions.

1 To prevent these Lusts.

2. To help against the two effects of these Lusts, viz. 1. Horrour of the Tentation. 2. The deadly blows of senselessness which they give.

To



*To prevent Unclean Lusts in*  
*Y O U T H.*

**F**irst, for such as are young; these are called the lusts of youth; they are most strong in youth, and come on worst there: because that their affections are strong, their judgments weak, and youth do conceit that they may take some liberty this way, and no man must ask them why they do so. They must be exhorted to fly the lusts of youth; *Timothy* was young in age, but old in conditions; a very true penitentiary, a drinker of water, a very weak crazie body, a  
D 5 great

great pains taker, a man fuller of grace than ordinary, being an extraordinary Officer in the Church; and yet *Paul* calls upon him being young: what, only to avoid? No; what, to run? No, but to fly from the lusts of youth, make all post-haste away from them. If *Timothy*, such a chaste and chastened piece as he was, had need of such a warning-piece, then youth have great need, *not to come near the dore of her house*, as *Solomon* doth advise his young Saint.



*To prevent uncleane lusts in old folks.*

**S**Econdly, such as are old must not cry holiday, and think that no danger lyes this way : alas the day, age will kill no sin, it is Christ and grace only that can cure any lust, else there were a sin for the death whereof in all, Christ did not dye, if (I say) this be found that age doth kill it in some : Such then as are in years, must not cast away their weapons, but walk in fear and care this way, yea, though they be good people



ple. I know the body is then coldish; and there is not that stirring with that strength, but if Satan come and blow the coals, there will rise a great flame, a mighty burning: an old house will quickly, and so will old People, if they let Satan alone. *Job* was not young, and married he was too, when he said, *he made a covenant with his eyes*, taking bonds of his senses, that he would not be caught with a maid; and maids are more inductive this way than such as are married. *Job*, not such a man in the whole world again, a chaste man, a married man, one that had children, and now somewhat in years, and yet you see his care and circumspection

spection this way. No man must  
 then think to walk at large, be-  
 cause he hath the remedy, and  
 is now growing towards his last  
 declension. Saint *Hierom* saith,  
 that his face was pale with fa-  
 sting, that his body was cold,  
 his flesh half dead already, yet  
 he complains, that in his wi-  
 thered carcass the flames of lust  
 did boil, and that his mind  
 was inflamed, and even all in a  
 scalding fire with fleshly desires,  
 and old he was also; and there-  
 fore we see in the best of men  
 that be, age of it self is no pri-  
 viledge; none must dare to bear  
 himself bold on his age: Satan  
 can help an old man and woman  
 to a wanton eye, to a young  
 tooth; sin is not so much in the  
 act

act as in the affection, it lies in the root : and God will suffer such an one sometimes to fall into burning passions, that by his own experience he may learn to know, that sin is properly and immediately in the Soul, and the Soul grows not old ; and that grace, not age, must be the death of sin : now an old man to fall into the passions and lusts of youth is monstrous, and proves almost uncurable. To see an old man covetous, is no such strange sight, but to see him lascivious is a great eyesore ; as to see an old man affected with the Gout and Stone, (the diseases of age) is not so much ; but to see an old body to be taken with the diseases of youth

youth is a strange sight, and  
 proves most dangerous; as to  
 have the small-pox, the worms,  
 and other diseases of children;  
 so in his soul, to find an old bo-  
 dy wantonly given, to be carry-  
 ed away with affections of un-  
 cleanness (which are properly  
 and commonly the lusts of youth)  
 is dangerous: I wish then old  
 people to keep off, and not to  
 thrust themselves upon the fire,  
 relying too much on their age;  
 yea, say that a man hath passed  
 over his youth with some free-  
 dom this way, and it may be,  
 hath not felt himself much gi-  
 ven after this vein, yet he were  
 best see that he hang not loose  
 when he comes to years; for  
 we have the confession of a  
 most

most strict and godly man, *Gregory Nazianzen* by name, who having in his fresh and younger time, carried a good hand over these lusts, when old and even done, he cries out that he was haunted and pestered most miserably with them. And *David* a better man than he, yet it was in the afternoon of his age that he fell into adultery. And when *Solomon* was old, saith the Text, he doted on out-landish women: how comes this? Like enough, because men being young fear themselves, when old, they think the worst is past, trust too much to the advantage of the body, lye not in their armour, have not their weapons ready, and then

Satan

Satan is too hard for them. 2. When old, then men are subject to much spiritual pride, and that perhaps because they stood so free from this sin, as though they had been somewhat in themselves; and now to cure that spiritual sickness, this base temptation is suffered to molest them. 3. If they had been thus set upon, when hot and young and full of sap, with such strong motions this way, like enough they should and would have sunk and yeilded: and God will have such know by their own feeling, what these lusts mean; wherefore that they may not receive that hurt by the temptation and impulsion, they have their hands full of them  
when

when old and cold , who did  
scape them , when green and  
young, 4. When and while  
young perhaps some bodily  
weakness held them in, which  
being healed in age, the fire  
breaks forth. 5. When young  
some retired imployment stops  
all, which being removed in age,  
out the passion comes. 6. Ma-  
ny be occupied with wild di-  
verting phantasies in their youth,  
that they care not for marriage,  
but when old and waxen sad,  
they grow very desirous of it.  
7. When younger perhaps God  
for some special reason gave them  
the gift, which when elder he  
takes from them. However, I  
wish both young and old, by all  
means to beware of this Snake.

*Rules*



*Rules to help against the mischiefs  
which usually follow the lusts of  
uncleanness.*

**T**He last of all, is in a word  
to help us out, in case we  
do go too far; we must take heed  
of both the extreames. 1. That  
we do not run upon the Rocks  
of Despair; there is nothing  
got by discouragement. During  
the time of huge and mighty  
terroures, it may be we shall have  
no mind nor heart to tamper  
with those lusts again, but yet  
for other sins, every way worse,  
worse to God, and worse to us;  
we



we lye all open to them, when we are in great dejection, as Discontent, Distrust, a secret rising against God, Unthankfulness, a finding fault with all that God either saith or doth, no care of the word, to reckon no other of the Scripture, than of our very Neck-verse, and a world of mischiefs more, which are the greatest sins indeed; on these occasions we are very apt to fall off from Gods mercy, to fry in hellish sorrow: no sins do so fire the conscience of a man, as these lusts of uncleanness do, they stare in our faces, look upon our consciences, as it were, with the eyes of so many Devils; and in this respect we must take great heed that we be not quite  
out

out of heart ; when a man is past hope, he is in his own sence past grace ; and when a man is made a terror to himself, great danger is at hand ; and therefore when frights do come, and such do find themselves too too apt to joyn with the motion to despair ; look upon Gods love , bear up in an apprehension and application of his mercy. Look upon instances in the Word, of better men than we are, who in the same or the like have seen a good end of all, and are now with the Lord. 2. The other extream is to grow *senceless*, to be *past feeling* ; we are apt in these cases to feel too much or too little ; for if our terrours overcome us, we despair ;

spair ; if we overcome them by  
 faith, we take comfort, if we  
 put them off by the flesh , we  
 grow secure, and it is common  
 out of great fears to run into  
 great danger, want of feeling,  
 and so we find it in the Apostle,  
 that lasciviousness breeds in us a  
 senselessness , it sears up the  
 conscience, and such come to be  
 past feeling. To open this, there  
 is a partial want of feeling, when  
 we commit sins and ail nothing  
 in some particulars. Thus we  
 find, that (otherwise) good peo-  
 ple, break out into excels in  
 buying and selling, do they care  
 not what in matters of profit  
 and feel nothing ; the consci-  
 ence sees all, saith nothing, or  
 as good as nothing : one would  
 wonder

wonder how men can sell day,  
 (I speak not against giving day,  
 but selling of it) let out their  
 money to use, hoard up corn,  
 directly against the Word of  
 God in the very letter, make up  
 some pieces for works on the  
 Lords day, are told of it in the  
 ministry, and yet nothing come  
 of it; why? Because custom  
 in them and in others hath taken  
 away their feeling: covetous-  
 ness hath made them in most  
 matters of commodity to be past  
 feeling, yet this is but partial;  
 we mean not to say that those  
 see and allow those to be sins;  
 for the point is, that though the  
 Word be plain, yet custom doth  
 so dazle their eyes, that they  
 cannot in this particular see the  
 right

right: so *David* and *Solomon* did multiply wives against that Text, *Deut. 17. 17.* The like did the Patriarchs for Polygamie. And some of the believing Gentiles saw not single fornication to be more than a thing indifferent, *Act. 15. 20, 21, 25. Rev. 2. 15, 20.* Yet this fornication is forbidden in the Word. So great is the force of custom: But should these men of our time meddle half so much in forbidden lusts of uncleanness as of covetousness: oh what pangs would rise in their conscience, they would feel it with a witness: But indeed when the passions of lasciviousness have once broken thorow the terrours of it, which usually come first; then

then they bring a man to a total senselessness, to be past feeling, not only in these and the like affections, but in all universally to make conscience of just nothing, to commit any sins that come to hand with all greediness, devour any thing like some stomachs, and be never troubled with it : it is so sensual a sin and gives such a blow to the natural conscience too, that like a sound knock on the head, it takes away all sense and feeling : let Satan propose what he will, nothing comes amiss ; for this sin of uncleanness fights against both light of nature and grace, and if the natural conscience speak, and we will not hear, and the spiritual conscience

conscience cry and we will not hearken, the conscience will grow speechless, and speak no more: and hence it is that such as come to a custom in some covetous practices, are past feeling in some things for some time; but such as come to a custom in the lusts of uncleanness are soon made to be past feeling simply and totally, scruple at nothing whatsoever.

Sith then the danger is as great as a seared conscience comes to, such as have broken their peace with God, must return and make all haste to repentance; the cry is so great, and the sight of it so odious, and the sence of it so grievous at first, and so palpable, that we

E                      with

with the more ease come to repent. It is a sin that doth convince it self to be a sin, (till a man hath lost his judgment and his spiritual tast : ) While it is a doing the judgment cries shame, and there is little to do, because our work lyes in a manner only with our affection, whereas many passions of anger, and pride, and covetousness are such, that the offender is long ere he can be brought to see the thing to be a sin, the fact to be a fault. But in pollutions of uncleanness they are so direct against the principles of reason, and so flat against all shew of Religion, that they carry their conviction in their mouths, which makes the heart more ready to entertain  
the



the work of repentance unto life; *Judah* repented, *David* repented, *Lot* repented, and so did *Thamar*, and so did others, and they were taken into special favour and honour, as we see them upon record in the first of *Matthew*. Those sins which much humble, do much honour; none humble more than such base lusts: *David* dyed in honour, *Mary Magdalen* is in great honour in the Church of God; Christ to comfort and honour her, appeared first and foremost to her; whatever heals the Soul, heals the name. Repentance doth both. The truth of our Repentance will best appear, if we go away as *Judah* did, and do so no more; come not near

the Garment spotted with the flesh : affections of another nature are more apt to bring a relapse than these passions, they leave such a sting and scent behind them, go away, (but with a smart, ) have such a taste, and are such a base sight that few relapse ; such as are by Gods mercy cured of these diseases, are commonly ever after very chaste, become as children in all purity and chastity : when we fetch out a great stain, the cloth is after whiter than ordinary ; and so after this staining sin is washed away : such must be and likely will be very holy, passing chaste ; beware of the least spark of sin : this is the meaning of that of *John the Baptist, Bring forth*

*for: h fruits meet or worthy of Repentance* : how worthy of repentance? It is that when a man hath been at it in the work of repentance; his works and deeds must afterwards be better than ordinary, he must look like a true penitent, that as a Physician can judge by the colour of the face that his patient is recovered, so must our works shine and carry such a lustre and colour with them, that one of skill may read it as written in our faces, that there is amendment of life, that now all is well and sound within.

And say by intemperate courses, one hath been the occasion of hastning his own end before the time. I grant that there is

just cause ( as *Solomon* speaks )  
*to mourn at the last*, when the flesh  
 and the body are consumed, and  
 we are ( accidentally ) guilty of  
 hastening our own death , be-  
 fore the time of Natures Period,  
 but never before the time of  
 Gods counsel : mourn here and  
 spare not, but yet not as men  
 without hope ; repentance will  
 mend this also. First, hardly  
 one man in a thousand, but one  
 way or other, more or less, cuts  
 off some of his days. Had it not  
 been for one thing or other, he  
 might have lived a day, a year  
 longer, as I think is plain e-  
 nough in *David*, who was bed-  
 rid at or about the age his fa-  
 ther begat him ; either nature  
 would have lasted , or might  
 have

have lasted longer in almost all, were it not for some defect, excess, or default in our selves : and therefore this accusation lies against almost all. Secondly this is besides a mans intention to give his *years to the cruel*. The *Libidinous* intention is to satisfy this sin in the lusts thereof; in that there is withal a waste of the radical moisture, and thereby a cutting off of his days; this is by accident only, and a consequent of the thing done, not a thing meant by the doer. Thirdly, sith repentance heals the pollution intended by the offender, it is against Religion and reason both, to question whether it will heal the consequent consumption not intended. *Amen.*



*Rules for such as are single.*

**S**uch as are single, if God give them by the use of his means the gift, let them keep themselves so, if they be wise. If not, then marry, and so marry, that they may attain a principal end of marriage. *Paul* gives wise counsel to *Parents*, that they suffer not their *Virgins* to pass the flower of their youth; his meaning is, when they have need of, and a mind unto that estate: else he tells us what is best; and here many of  
our

our Gentry are to blame, who keep not their younger sons so much from marriage, but they do post and thrust their daughters on this estate, albeit they have no mind or need, which is a misery; as to be made to eat when one is not an-hungred: Avoid all extreames, and when God and nature call, go in any hand, and that in time, and not stay till the lusts of youth, which marriage is to cure, be past: have the house first on a light fire, and then go about to quench it; whereas marriage is ordained to prevent and kill the lusts of youth: and know that if we be about to provide for our Children; then in hope that ere long it will be had, children  
will

will contain and hold in the better , (as *Chrysostom* observes) but in case that they see that we make no haste, take no care, they will marry themselves, or else ease themselves by some ungodly courses. The counsel then is, to make all good haste to enter them into this estate in fit time ; and in the interim, to maintain their natural modesty, and spiritual chastity all we can, speak not an immodest word , look not an immodest look, use not any light action in their presence. A Roman was degraded for that he did but kiss his own wife before his children , and the ancient Christians were very curious and dainty this way ; their order was, that men and  
 maids



maids sate so at Church, that  
 one did not, nor could not see  
 one another; the women-kind  
 had their vails: And in the  
 East Churches, I am sure Vir-  
 gins and Maids, were not used  
 to come at marriages; we can-  
 not do too much this way; and  
 many take such liberty before,  
 that after marriage they do rue  
 it all the days of their lives. Many  
 stay to provide a rich match till  
 it be too late; for all the while  
 the stream is dammed up with  
 untempered mortar, it doth and  
 will rage the more, and a vent  
 one way or other it will and  
 must have: and hence we see,  
 that such as are kept from that  
 estate by a kind of force, are  
 the worst that way that be this  
 day

day in the world,; as your Jesuites, Fryers, and Nuns. It is our corrupt humour, to be stronger in our passions where we are denyed; and a wound bound up and unhealed, ranckles worse than if it were open: which made the Apostle to call that Doctrine (which forbids marriage, and gave not the gift) the Doctrine of Devils; sith it puts a man upon the necessity of finning a sin, and so foul a sin as uncleanness, and for want of a natural stream, to run over into unnatural practices, which do carry a man and woman much beyond the line, and put him far and far from God. And this makes way for some complaint against Widows states, which

in some, chiefly of the younger  
 sort, must needs prove a practice  
 of Devils in the Apostles sence,  
 because it doth thrust some wo-  
 men into a necessity of sinning.  
 The Apostle doth counsel the  
 younger Widows to marry,  
 to bear children; else saith he,  
 they will, not only they may,  
 but they will marry, and wax  
 wanton against Christ. All that  
 is said is, that these widows  
 may mend it, and marry if they  
 will; but it is hard for Women  
 to turn themselves out of house  
 and all, rather than sin: and if  
 they have nothing, who will  
 have them as things go now.  
 Indeed among the Jews, where  
 they gave mony for their Wives  
 this exception would be of some  
 force

force; but now amongst us where money makes the match, they may sit and fry long enough ere any will make suit unto them to marry them, when they must on their marriage be outed of all. What ever they think they may be able to do while the Husband is alive; yet when the man is dead, the widow is in danger to sing another song: we care not much for that we may and must have; but when it is denyed us, and we are tyed from it; then as in the Gospel, they told it abroad the rather because Christ bid them tell no body; so the passions of women will rage the more, because now they must not marry; and a young widow

dow will be less able to contain and be chaste than when she was a Virgin. They urge that it is convenient, they to remain, to bring up their Children ; but a curse is like to follow this condition wherein is a needs-must sin, and all to breed up children : and we see what good birds many of the children prove; that estate of Life is fittest for a woman to live in to breed up children , wherein she is most free to serve God , and is most of all preserved from sin. And we see widows that have children and stand free, will tell you that they marry to have one to help them to bring up their children, and the sons will stand more in awe of their Father-in-law

law than of a woman their Mother ; and we do see, that men do use to take as great care for their Wives former children as though they were their own : and when two have a joynt care, it is better than if one only ; and a womans care and power is never the less when she hath one in commission with her to help her. A little matter in the taker, or a little favour in the setter would help all to turn a widows estate into a life ; and it were nothing in the setter to suffer such as they see have, or are like to have need , to marry.

FINIS.

and  
er  
e,  
to